

COMMON SENSE MANAGEMENT



The “First to Fire” branch has put the common sense approach to work to offset a potential understrength situation in our Patriot MOSs.

Both MOS 16T (Patriot Missile Crewmember) and MOS 24T (Patriot Operator/System Mechanic) suffer declining soldier retention rates, due largely to the increasing number of Patriot missions and frequent rotational assignments. Just 58 percent of the Patriot force (versus 80 percent of Army forces) is stationed within the continental United States. A U.S. Army Personnel Command review last March put the retention rate for both MOSs at 42 percent — an unacceptable retention rate, particularly for MOSs faced with the challenges of fielding new Patriot and Theater High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battalions.

A tenth Patriot battalion, 3-2 ADA, will activate at Fort Bliss, Texas, in October. Standardizing Patriot battalions at five firing batteries each should free up soldiers to man 3-2 ADA, but our existing Patriot battalions did not all have six firing batteries; in fact, 1-7 ADA had just three firing batteries. Patriot soldiers will also be called upon to man another THAAD battalion, scheduled to stand up early in the next century. The THAAD system organization holds a future total of 680 new positions.

Common sense tells us that we cannot expect Patriot soldiers to willingly sign up for more frequent deployments while their fellow soldiers enjoy the bulk of stateside assignments. Common sense also tells us that if we ask Patriot soldiers to carry the bigger burden, we should compensate them for their extra effort.

Air Defense Artillery has instituted a number of incentives for soldiers willing to shoulder the Patriot load — incentives that *pass the common sense test*. First-termers in MOSs 16T and 24T, for example, qualify for a 2A selective reenlistment bonus (SRB) (two times basic pay multiplied by the number of years of reenlistment). MOS 24T mid-careerists may also receive a 2B bonus. New enlistees choosing MOS 16T can garner an Army College Fund of \$20 thousand (two-year obligation), \$25 thousand (three-year obligation) or \$30 thousand (four-year obligation), or can opt instead for a \$2,000 enlistment bonus (four-, five- or six-year obligation).

Common sense solutions, such as these enlistment incentives, will permanently improve ADA soldiers’ quality of life.

Soldiers, America’s Heartbeat!

Jeffery G. Jordan
Command Sergeant Major

*A woman’s heart is like a campfire.
If you don’t tend to it regular, you’ll
soon lose it.*